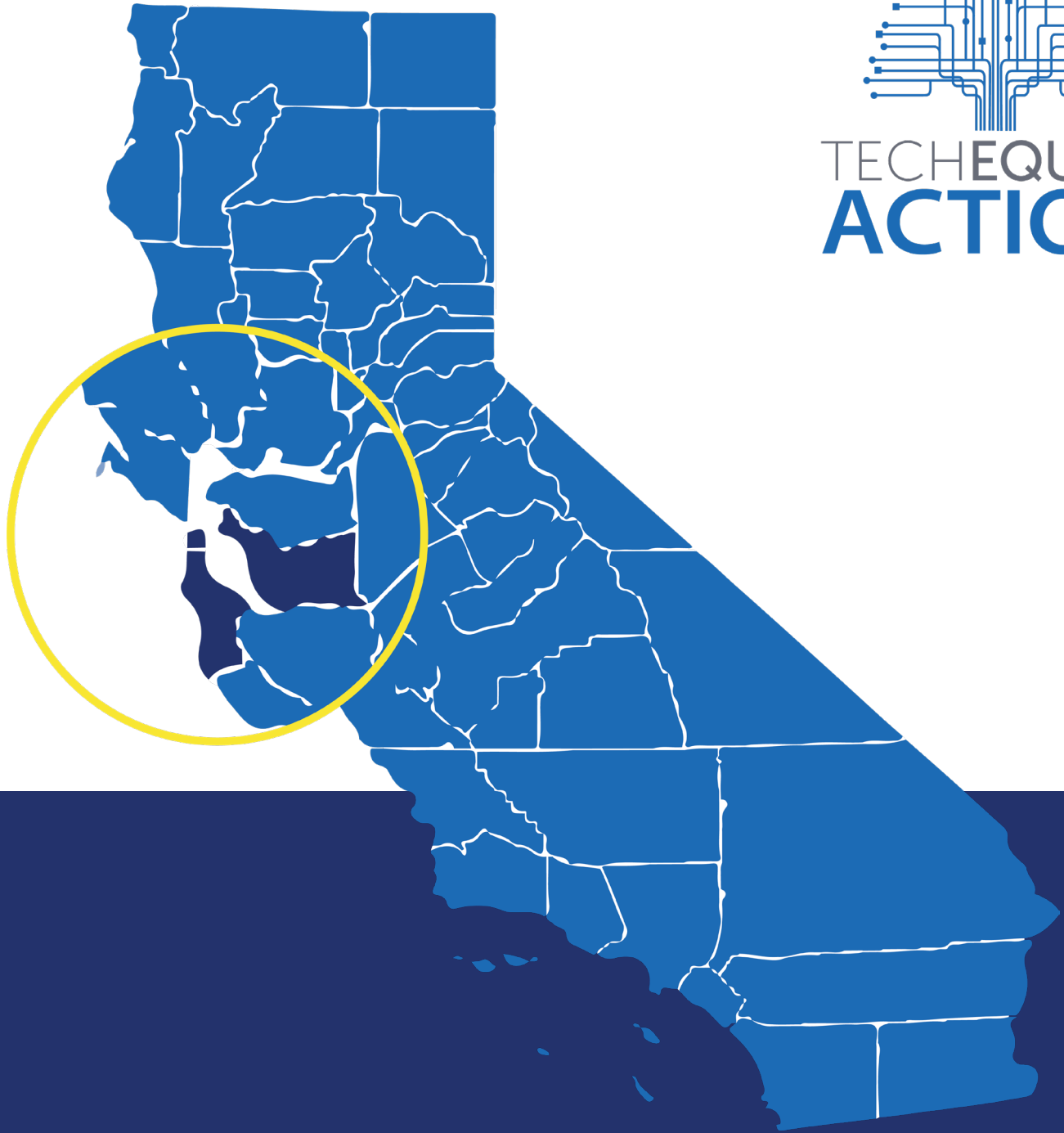


TECHEQUITY
ACTION



TechEquity Action Voter Guide November 2022

Statewide Measures

San Francisco, Oakland, and Berkeley City Measures

San Mateo County Measures

Key Candidate Recommendations

Statewide Measures

- 1** Constitutional Right to Reproductive Freedom
No position
- 26** Sports Betting on Tribal Lands
No position
- 27** Online Sports Betting
No position
- 28** Arts Education Funding
No position
- 29** Dialysis Clinic Regulation
No position
- 30** Funding for Air Pollution Reduction
No position
- 31** Allowing Flavored Tobacco Products
No position

San Francisco Measures

- A** Retiree Cost of Living
No position
- B** Public Works Commission
No position
- C** Homeless Oversight Commission
No position
- D** Affordable Housing Petition
Position: Yes
- E** Affordable Housing Board of Supervisors
Position: No
- F** Library Funding
No position
- G** Student Success Fund
No position
- H** City Election in Even Years
No position
- I** Restoring Vehicle Use on JFK, etc
No position
- J** Recreational Use of JFK, etc
No position
- L** Sales Tax for Transportation
No position
- M** Vacancy Tax
Position: Yes
- N** Golden Gate Parking
No position
- O** Parcel Tax for City College
No position

Oakland Measures

- Q** Article 34 Units Approval
Position: Yes
- R** Gender Neutral City Charter
No position
- S** Non-Citizen Voting for School Elections
No position
- T** Progressive Business Tax
Position: Yes
- U** Affordable Housing Bond
Position: Yes
- V** Just Cause
Position: Yes
- W** Citizen's Election Fund
No position
- X** Councilmember Term Limits
No position
- Y** Zoo Funding
No position
- H** College and Career for All
No position

Berkeley Measures

- L** Affordable Housing Bond
Position: Yes
- M** Vacancy Tax
Position: Yes
- N** Article 34 Unit Authorization
Position: Yes

San Mateo County Measures

East Palo Alto

- L** Rental Property Business Tax
Position: Yes

Menlo Park

- V** Citizen's Vote for Zoning Changes
Position: No

South San Francisco

- AA** Article 34 Unit Authorization
Position: Yes
- DD** Universal Preschool Parcel Tax
No position

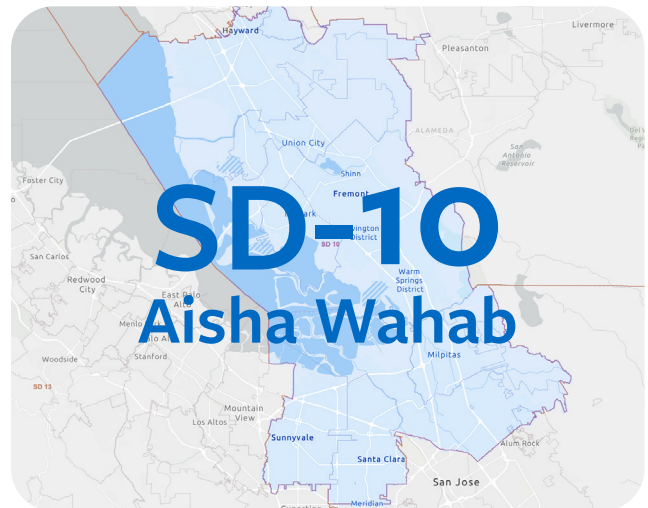
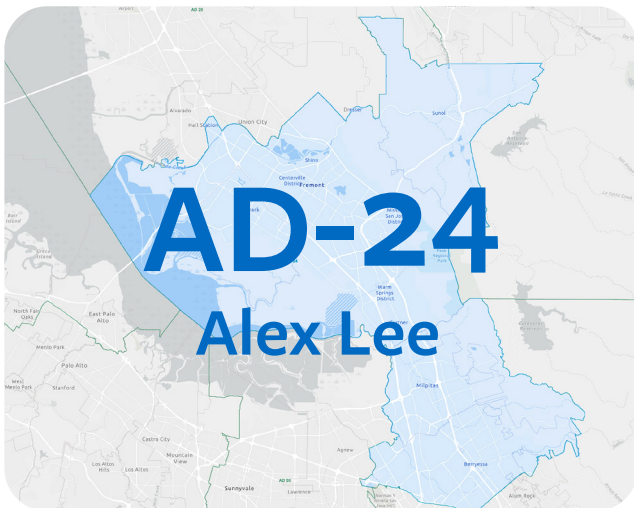
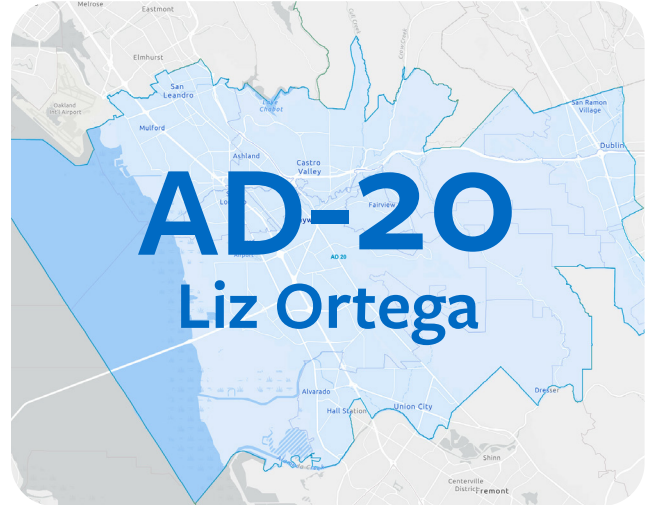


Table of Contents

Voter Guide Overview	7
Measures	7
Candidates	7
Statewide Measures	8
Proposition 1: Constitutional Right to Reproductive Freedom	8
Proposition 26: Allows In-Person Roulette, Dice Games, Sports Wagering on Tribal Lands	9
Proposition 27: Allows Online and Mobile Sports Wagering Outside Tribal Lands	9
Proposition 28: Provides Additional Funding for Arts and Music Education in Public Schools	10
Proposition 29: Requires On-Site Licensed Medical Professional at Kidney Dialysis Clinics and Establishes Other State Requirements	10
Proposition 30: Provides Funding for Programs to Reduce Air Pollution and Prevent Wildfires by Increasing Tax on Personal Income Over \$2 Million	11
Proposition 31: Referendum On 2020 Law That Would Prohibit the Retail Sale of Certain Flavored Tobacco Products	11
San Francisco Measures	12
San Francisco Measure A: Retiree Supplemental Cost of Living Adjustment	12
San Francisco Measure B: Public Works Department and Commission	12
San Francisco Measure C: Homelessness Oversight Committee	13
San Francisco Measure D and Measure E Context	14
San Francisco Measure D: Affordable Housing Initiative Petition	15
San Francisco Measure E: Affordable Housing Board of Supervisors	16
San Francisco Measure F: Library Preservation Fund	17
San Francisco Measure G: Student Success Fund	17
San Francisco Measure H: City Elections in Even Numbered Years	17
San Francisco Measure I: Vehicles on JFK, Great Highway, Golden Gate Park	18

San Francisco Measure J: Recreational Use of JFK Drive in Golden Gate Park	18
San Francisco Measure L: Sales Tax for Transportation	19
San Francisco Measure M: Vacancy Tax	19
San Francisco Measure N: Golden Gate Park Underground Parking Facility	19
San Francisco Measure O: Additional Parcel Tax for City College	20
Oakland Measures	21
Oakland Measure Q: Article 34 Affordable Housing Units Approval	21
Oakland Measure R: Gender Neutral City Charter	21
Oakland Measure S: Voting for Non-Citizens in School Board Elections	22
Oakland Measure T: Progressive Business Tax	22
Oakland Measure U: Affordable Housing and Transportation Bond	23
Oakland Measure V: Just Cause	23
Oakland Measure W: Citizen’s Election Fund	23
Oakland Measure X: Councilmember Term Limits and Pay	24
Oakland Measure Y: Parcel Tax to Fund the Oakland Zoo	24
Oakland Unified School District Measure H: College and Career for All Initiative	25
Berkeley Measures	26
Berkeley Measure L: Affordable Housing & Infrastructure Bond	26
Berkeley Measure M: Vacancy Tax	26
Berkeley Measure N: Article 34 Low Income Housing	27
San Mateo County Measures	28
East Palo Alto Measure L: Residential Rental Property Business Tax Measure	28
Menlo Park Measure V: Citizen’s Vote for Residential Zoning Changes	28
South San Francisco Measure AA: Article 34 Affordable Housing Authorization	29
South San Francisco Measure DD: Universal Preschool Parcel Tax	29
Santa Clara County Measures	29

Candidate Recommendations	30
Assembly District 12: Sara Aminzadeh	30
Assembly District 20: Liz Ortega	32
Assembly District 24: Alex Lee	34
Senate District 10: Aisha Wahab	36

Voter Guide Overview

[TechEquity Action](#) is a non-profit advocacy organization that works to ensure that the tech industry is a force for justice in our economy. We do this by empowering tech workers to advocate for structural change through progressive policy and candidate campaigns.

We activate tech workers on issue areas that will achieve more inclusive economic growth, specifically within the areas of housing and labor. In California, much of this policy change happens on the ballot, and many of the ballot initiatives—especially the local ones—can be hard to understand.

Measures

We cover all the state ballot measures as well as local ballot measures where TechEquity's base of supporters is concentrated. We make recommendations with a yes or no position on ballot measures that directly intersect with our core issue areas of housing and labor, and align with [our values and policy platform](#).

Candidates

We're sharing our assessment of four critical races across the Bay Area. We evaluated the candidates' experience and positions against our criteria:

- The candidate's alignment with TechEquity Action's [housing and labor policy platforms](#),
- The candidate's alignment with [TechEquity Action's values](#),
- The candidate's effectiveness, demonstrating a strong track record of success in elected office and/or a clear, compelling, and concrete plan to win on our issues.

Statewide Measures

Proposition 1: Constitutional Right to Reproductive Freedom

In the wake of the Supreme Court overturning *Roe v. Wade*, a decision that puts the right to choose in the hands of states rather than guaranteeing it as a federal right, states are scrambling to create their own frameworks for abortion access. California has long embraced a person's reproductive rights but never added that right explicitly to the state's constitution. Reproductive freedom is protected in California currently through the state's guarantee of a person's right to privacy, but what constitutes privacy and whether abortion is included in that is not defined within the state constitution directly. Rather, California has relied on State Supreme Court precedent which has previously affirmed the right to choose an abortion.

Placed on the ballot by California's legislature at the request of Governor Newsom, Prop 1 will make this right explicit within the state constitution, ensuring that future court decisions would not overturn a person's right to choose as happened federally. If passed, Prop 1 would add to the state constitution clarifying language that the state cannot deny or interfere with a person's reproductive freedom and that people have the fundamental right to choose whether or not to have an abortion and whether or not to use contraceptives.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Proposition 26: Allows In-Person Roulette, Dice Games, Sports Wagering on Tribal Lands

In 2018 the Supreme Court overturned a federal ban on sports betting, clearing the way for expanded gambling. Since then, almost half of all U.S. states have embraced sports betting. Tribes in California have placed Prop 26 on the ballot to make California next and ensure all gambling operations, including sports betting, are operated by tribes and not other private entities.

The proposition would allow tribal casinos and racetracks to offer sports betting and also allow the expansion of the games offered at these facilities. Currently, state law allows tribal casinos to operate slots, but Prop 26 would also allow games like roulette and craps. The proposition would raise potentially tens of millions of dollars for the state budget, most of which would be spent at the discretion of the Governor and Legislature.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Proposition 27: Allows Online and Mobile Sports Wagering Outside Tribal Lands

Online sports betting companies like DraftKings and FanDuel want a piece of the profits from sports gambling, and their proposal would position them to do just that. Prop 27 would also allow sports betting in California much like Prop 26 but with a few key differences. Prop 27 would allow that activity online and would allow private companies, not just tribes, to get in on the action. Prop 27 sets parameters for who can facilitate online sports betting, requiring that the purveyors be “large, well-established” betting companies, meaning that almost no one would qualify except the proponents of the measure themselves.

Prop 27 sets aside a portion of the tax revenue from gambling activity to fund the Homeless Housing, Assistance, and Prevention Program (HHAPP) which provides flexible funding to cities, counties, and tribes to address homelessness in their communities.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Proposition 28: Provides Additional Funding for Arts and Music Education in Public Schools

For the last several decades, public education spending on the arts has steadily declined. Many schools lack full-time music or art teachers; former Los Angeles Unified School District Superintendent Austin Beutner wants to reverse that trend by placing Prop 28 on the ballot. The initiative would require that the state establish a minimum funding requirement for arts education, contributing from the general fund an amount equal to 1% of required education funding amounting to likely between \$800 million to \$1 billion per year.

The new money would be split, with 70 percent going to schools proportionally (based on their previous year's enrollment) and the remaining 30 percent distributed to schools based on their share of economically disadvantaged students.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Proposition 29: Requires On-Site Licensed Medical Professional at Kidney Dialysis Clinics and Establishes Other State Requirements

This measure might sound familiar, and that's because its proponents, SEIU United Healthcare Workers West, have placed similar measures on the ballot previously—Prop 8 in 2018 and Prop 23 in 2020 also attempted to reform practices at dialysis clinics. Both measures failed to pass on the ballot, and companies who own dialysis centers have spent enormous amounts to ensure their defeat.

Undeterred, the union has placed Prop 29 on this year's ballot. Similar to its predecessors, the measure would require increased regulation of dialysis facilities. Prop 29 will require that a physician, nurse practitioner, or physician assistant be on site during patient treatments; that patients are informed when physicians have an ownership interest in a clinic; and would require that infection information be reported to the state.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Proposition 30: Provides Funding for Programs to Reduce Air Pollution and Prevent Wildfires by Increasing Tax on Personal Income Over \$2 Million

California has already made a commitment to stop the sale of gas-powered vehicles by 2035, but some environmentalists and businesses think more needs to be done to reduce air pollution. Prop 30 would impose a new 1.75% tax on any individual's income of more than \$2 million per year to raise between \$3 billion to \$4.5 billion each year to reduce greenhouse gasses and emissions.

Most of the money would go toward new incentives for Californians to buy zero-emission vehicles and to build new non-gasoline fueling stations. A major backer of the initiative is Lyft, which has been mandated to make the switch to zero-emission vehicles by 2030 and would benefit from the incentives created by Prop 30.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Proposition 31: Referendum On 2020 Law That Would Prohibit the Retail Sale of Certain Flavored Tobacco Products

In 2020, Gov. Newsom signed a bill that banned the sale of all flavored tobacco products in the state, including vape products. Prop 31 was placed on the ballot by major tobacco companies like R. J. Reynolds and Phillip Morris who hope to undo the legislature's ban and increase their sales.

Proponents of the measure say that the 2020 ban on flavored tobacco is necessary to prevent minors from smoking since these products are more appealing to—and often marketed toward—teens. Opponents say that tobacco sales to minors are already illegal, rendering the law banning flavored tobacco unnecessary and restricting choice for adult tobacco users. Voting “yes” is to keep the law banning the sale of flavored tobacco products, a “no” vote on the measure will overturn this ban allowing the sale of these products in the state.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

San Francisco Measures

San Francisco Measure A: Retiree Supplemental Cost of Living Adjustment

Introduced by Supervisor Ahsha Safaí, the measure will help bolster retirement funds for city employees. The measure will adjust the supplemental cost-of-living benefits for those who retired before Nov. 6, 1996. San Francisco Employees' Retirement System (SFERS) currently requires that the retirement system has to be fully funded for retirees to receive their entire payouts. This is determined based on the prior year's market value of the system's assets.

Measure A eliminates the requirement that SFERS is fully funded and adjusts the retirees' base allowance to account for the loss in payments during five years where they didn't receive payments because of the full-funding requirement. Monthly supplemental payments would be capped at \$200 for eligible retirees whose gross allowance exceeds \$4,167 per month.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

San Francisco Measure B: Public Works Department and Commission

After the approval of [Measure B in 2020](#), the city split off duties related to street cleaning from the Public Works department and re-assigned those duties to a newly created department, Sanitation and Streets. Since the passage of Measure B in 2020, the city has been working to organize the new Sanitation and Streets department, which is set to officially launch this October, but Supervisors want to roll back the plans to split the departments.

Citing unnecessary costs associated with setting up a new city department and skepticism that division of the street cleaning duties will actually result in cleaner streets, Supervisor Aaron Peskin has proposed this year's Measure B to roll back much of the plans set forth through the passage of 2020's Measure B. If it passes, Measure B will eliminate what Supervisor Peskin views as redundancies and increased administrative costs created by the new department by moving street cleaning duties back under the purview of the Department of Public Works, but will maintain an oversight committee for streets and sanitation.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

San Francisco Measure C: Homelessness Oversight Committee

The Department of Homelessness and Supportive Services is the city's largest agency without an oversight committee. The department is responsible for a \$700 million budget, and Supervisor Safaí wants to ensure there is a body creating accountability for the expenditure of those funds. Without a commission, there are limited channels for residents and activists to provide input on the city's homelessness policies and services and to ensure proper stewardship of the department's funding. It also means that city staff can make decisions without much accountability.

Homelessness activists say the establishment of an oversight committee is crucial. A [recent investigation by the San Francisco Chronicle found that city staff has authorized millions to be spent to shelter those who are unhoused in dilapidated hotels with squalid conditions.](#)

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

San Francisco Measure D and Measure E Context

San Francisco is in desperate need of affordable housing. The City has been given a mandate by the state to build 82,000 units by 2030. The state's Department of Housing and Community Development has also initiated a review of the city's permitting and approval process, one of many sticking points that complicate and slow the production of housing in the city. With the state putting the city's Housing Element—plans that cities are required to present to the state about how they will satisfy the state's housing production targets—under review, the pressure is on for San Francisco to make realistic plans to build more housing, and streamlining affordable housing approval is the priority on this year's ballot.

Mayor Breed's idea to achieve a less burdensome process wasn't supported by the Board of Supervisors, so she worked with community groups to get the proposal on the ballot via initiative petition, placing Measure D before voters. The Board of Supervisors weren't satisfied, so they placed their own affordable housing streamlining measure on the ballot as well, Measure E. Both measures seek to solve the same problem but do so with slightly different approaches. In this instance, the devil is in the details and with no ability to compromise, the warring political factions of San Francisco let the battle spill out onto the ballot and left the voters to decide between these intersecting and somewhat confusing initiatives.

Both measures aim to streamline the approval process for 100% affordable housing, mixed-income housing, and teacher housing but do so through slightly different approaches. Because the measures have competing provisions, if both get more than 50%+1 approval the measure with the greatest number of votes will become law. This means voting in favor of both measures defeats the purpose. While the goals of both policies are noble, we recommend voting No on Measure E and Yes on Measure D.

San Francisco Measure D: Affordable Housing Initiative Petition

Mayor Breed's proposal, dubbed the Affordable Homes Now initiative, would remove the discretionary review process for the approval of certain housing projects.

Projects eligible to skip the review and approvals process under Measure D must meet the following criteria (these are where Measures D and E differ):

- The project is 100% affordable
- The project includes 10 or more units at mixed-income and will offer at least 15% more affordable housing than the city's existing inclusionary requirement
- The project is teacher housing where all of the units are made available to households with at least one SFUSD or City College employee and where at least 80% of the units are affordable

Notably, Measure D lacks many of the eligibility requirements set forth by its competitor, Measure E, detailed below. This is the strength of Measure D, fewer eligibility requirements with straightforward criteria mean that more projects will be able to skip the lengthy review process and ease the pathway to construction.

Position: Yes

San Francisco Measure E: Affordable Housing Board of Supervisors

Supervisor Connie Chan led the charge on the Board of Supervisors to place the Affordable Housing Production Act on the ballot, an initiative that would remove the discretionary review process for some housing projects. Chan claims her proposal will also hasten the development of affordable housing, but her proposal presents more barriers that developments need to clear in order to skip review.

Measure E would allow streamlined approvals for projects that meet its criteria:

- The project is 100% affordable
- The project includes 10 or more units at mixed-income and will offer at least 8% more affordable housing than the city's existing inclusionary requirement
- The project is teacher housing where all of the units are made available to households with at least one SFUSD or City College employee and where at least 80% of the units are affordable
- Restricts eligibility according to size and affordability requirements for studios, which must be no less than 300 square feet and rent for no more than 80% AMI.
- Requires that 30% of affordable units have 2 bedrooms and 20% have 3 bedrooms

Supporters of Measure E say that these additional requirements are necessary to ensure that units that qualify for streamlined approval will be truly affordable and serve the needs of the city's families. With these additional requirements, the type and configuration of eligible developments will be diminished, defeating the purpose of the streamlining effort.

Position: No

San Francisco Measure F: Library Preservation Fund

San Francisco Libraries are currently supported by a fund that is set to expire; Measure F will renew that funding for another 25 years to provide support for library operations and services. Money for the fund comes from an annual property tax set-aside of 2.5 cents per \$100 and was placed on the ballot by a unanimous vote of the Board of Supervisors.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

San Francisco Measure G: Student Success Fund

The measure would set up a Student Success Fund, pulling together up to \$60 million per year to be distributed through grants to support academic programs or social-emotional wellness. The money would be made available to San Francisco schools through grants of up to \$1 million per year. The Student Success Fund would pull revenue from the city's property taxes and was placed on the ballot by a unanimous vote of the Board of Supervisors, led by Supervisor Hillary Ronen.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

San Francisco Measure H: City Elections in Even Numbered Years

The measure would shift all San Francisco elections to even years. Proponents argue that the move will bolster voter turnout in elections, particularly among young voters, voters of color, and renters since these groups are less likely to turn out in off-year elections. Opponents of the measure worry that the move connects labor contracts to mayoral elections, increasing the likelihood of nepotism or corruption.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

San Francisco Measure I: Vehicles on JFK, Great Highway, Golden Gate Park

The San Francisco Board of Supervisors voted in April to permanently extend the pandemic-era restriction on vehicles on JFK Drive in Golden Gate Park. Some residents weren't happy with the decision, so they circulated a petition to place Measure I on the ballot to reverse the Supervisor's decision and return JFK Drive to its pre-pandemic use. If passed, JFK Drive would reopen to car traffic on weekdays as well as Saturdays from October to March. The Great Highway from Skyline Boulevard to Lincoln Way would also be open to cars seven days a week under the measure.

Opponents of the measure argue that keeping JFK Drive car-free improves quality of life and recreation access in the city, as closed-to-traffic roadways have become popular biking, jogging, and walking routes. Proponents of the measure argue that closing JFK Drive to traffic is an accessibility issue, making it more difficult for those with disabilities to access Golden Gate Park and enjoy recreational facilities.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

San Francisco Measure J: Recreational Use of JFK Drive in Golden Gate Park

San Francisco Measure J was placed on the ballot by the Board of Supervisors in response to residents placing Measure I on the ballot. Measure J, if passed, would affirm the Board of Supervisors' decision to permanently close JFK Drive in Golden Gate Park, the upper portion of the Great Highway near Ocean Beach, and other roads in recreational areas of parks to vehicle access.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

San Francisco Measure L: Sales Tax for Transportation

Placed on the ballot by the Board of Supervisors in an effort led by Supervisor Rafael Mandelman, Measure L will extend the city's existing 0.5% sales tax that funds transportation for another 30 years. The Transportation Authority would be allowed to issue up to \$1.19 billion in bonds to be repaid with proceeds from the tax.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

San Francisco Measure M: Vacancy Tax

In an effort to chip away at San Francisco's housing crisis by discouraging vacancy in the city's limited housing stock, Supervisor Dean Preston worked with his colleagues to place Measure M on the ballot. The proposal would tax units that have been vacant for more than 182 days if those units are in triplexes or larger apartment complexes. Single-family homes and duplexes are exempt.

The proposed tax would range from \$2,500 to \$5,000 in the first year, depending on the size of the unit, increasing to a maximum of \$20,000 in later years. Money raised from the tax would be earmarked for acquiring and preserving affordable housing and rent subsidies for seniors and low-income households.

Position: Yes

San Francisco Measure N: Golden Gate Park Underground Parking Facility

The Music Concourse Garage in Golden Gate Park is an 800-space underground parking facility near many of the park's attractions like the DeYoung Museum. The garage has a maximum day rate of \$33 on weekends. Mayor Breed is leading the effort to pass Measure N, she believes the facility is underutilized due to the high rates and wants to pass the measure to allow the city to use public money to buy, operate, or subsidize public parking in the garage. Mayor Breed believes the measure would give the city more flexibility in managing the garage, such as providing subsidized parking for people with disabilities.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

San Francisco Measure O: Additional Parcel Tax for City College

San Francisco City College has struggled to fund its programs, laying off hundreds of employees. Measure O was placed on the ballot by supporters of the college to help provide an injection of funding that would hopefully allow the college to course-correct. If passed, the measure would raise approximately \$43 million annually for the school through a parcel tax. The tax would vary depending on property type and would increase with inflation. Starting in 2023 the tax would be \$150 annually for single-family homes and the tax would expire in 20 years.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Oakland Measures

Oakland Measure Q: Article 34 Affordable Housing Units Approval

California's Article 34—a racist relic of our state's constitution—requires that local governments must have their electorate vote to approve affordable housing before it can be built if it will use public funds. Until Article 34 is repealed, cities will have to continue to put measures like this one on the ballot. Measure Q will satisfy Article 34's requirements by authorizing the city to build 13,000 low-income units of housing.

The measure wouldn't provide funding to build any housing, and it doesn't greenlight any specific projects, it only authorizes future units assuming the city can line up the land, funding, and resources necessary to build later on.

Position: Yes, [and we should repeal Article 34](#).

Oakland Measure R: Gender Neutral City Charter

Following the lead of its neighbor Berkeley, which eliminated the use of gendered language in city code back in 2019, Measure R will update the City Charter with gender-neutral language. The current charter includes gendered language that implies that certain jobs are only performed by one gender or uses gendered pronouns. The measure will eliminate this language and change terms like "Policeman" to "Police Officer" to use more inclusive language.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Oakland Measure S: Voting for Non-Citizens in School Board Elections

Non-citizens make up 14% of Oakland's residents, but they lack representation in key decisions that affect their lives. Despite paying taxes that help fund our schools, sending their children to Oakland schools, and participating in community life, non-citizens cannot vote in any election. This bars parents from weighing in on who will be elected to the School Board and making decisions affecting their children's education.

If passed, Measure S would allow the City Council to draft an ordinance to allow non-citizens who are the parents or legal guardians of school-aged children to vote in OUSD school board director elections. In 2016, San Francisco passed Measure N to allow non-citizens to vote in school board races, but the law was recently thrown out by a California district-court judge, who ruled the law violated the state's constitution. The same groups who challenged San Francisco's law in court have filed suit against Oakland to prevent Measure S from moving forward.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Oakland Measure T: Progressive Business Tax

The city's current business tax structure categorizes businesses according to type and taxes them accordingly. For example, all grocery stores pay the same business tax rate, regardless of size. Oakland City Council President Nikki Fortunato Bas wants to reform that system and ensure that big businesses in the city like Amazon-owned Whole Foods pay a steeper rate than small grocers.

The progressive business tax reform proposed would overhaul the city's tax code and create a structure where businesses are taxed based on their gross receipts. Smaller companies with gross receipts below \$1 million would pay lower tax rates than under the current structure. Larger companies above the \$1 million threshold would see an increase in their tax bill.

Position: Yes

Oakland Measure U: [Affordable Housing and Transportation Bond](#)

The [2022 Affordable Housing and Infrastructure Bond](#) would allow Oakland to raise as much as \$850 million for a variety of projects, including \$350 million for affordable housing and \$290 million for transportation. The rest could be used on parks, libraries, fire and police facilities, Head Start centers, and other city properties. Oakland, like the rest of California, is in a deep housing affordability crisis, and without consistent sustainable revenue from another source, the city lacks the funds necessary to produce the affordable housing needed to meet demand.

We would prefer to see a move toward more sustainable, long-term funding sources which is why [TechEquity Collaborative has been a strong proponent of reforming Prop 13](#). However, until better funding sources are identified and approved, bonds are one of the only tools cities have at their disposal to address the funding shortages they face in providing affordable housing.

Position: Yes

Oakland Measure V: [Just Cause](#)

Oakland's Just Cause for Eviction Law limits the reasons a landlord can evict renters to serious offenses like non-payment of rent, property damage, or conducting illegal activity on the premises. Measure V will expand these protections to cover renters who live in RVs; it will also kick into effect for tenants in newly constructed apartments 10 years after construction. The proposal also seeks to stabilize teachers and families of school-aged children by preventing their eviction during a school year.

Position: Yes

Oakland Measure W: [Citizen's Election Fund](#)

A majority of candidate campaigns are self-funded, funded by a small group of higher-dollar donors, or funded by corporations since most Oaklanders don't give money to candidates running for local elected positions. The "[Fair Elections Act](#)" would create a fund for elections where every registered voter receives four \$25 vouchers to give to candidates of their choosing. The program would cost the city about \$4 million every two years

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Oakland Measure X: Councilmember Term Limits and Pay

Oakland currently has no term limits, allowing Councilmembers to stay in office for as long as they are reelected for their seat every four years. Councilmember Dan Kalb spearheaded the effort to place Measure X on the ballot, which would limit councilmembers to three 4-year terms.

The measure also includes other government reforms, including a requirement that the Council host at least two public hearings before placing a measure on the ballot, increasing the opportunities for the public to weigh in beyond the one hearing currently required. The measure would also boost Councilmember salaries by tying them to inflation, automatically bumping the salaries as the cost of living increases.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Oakland Measure Y: Parcel Tax to Fund the Oakland Zoo

During the pandemic, many venues that rely on ticket sales for revenue suffered, including the Oakland Zoo. Measure Y would establish a \$68 parcel tax for the next 20 years to help fund the zoo. The parcel tax provides some exemptions for seniors, low-income households, and others.

The zoo is a nonprofit that relies on the city, private grants, and ticket sales to fund its operations including educational programs. In 2020, ticket sales plummeted and zoo leadership announced that the facility would need to close without an additional injection of funds; Measure Y is designed to provide that funding.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Oakland Unified School District Measure H: College and Career for All Initiative

Oakland's College and Career for All Initiative has focused on career-based learning opportunities for students to decrease dropout rates and increase students' ability to succeed in their future careers and higher-education plans. The program has proven successful since it was established in 2014 through Measure N funding, decreasing the dropout rate from 24% to 13%.

The parcel tax that funds that program is set to expire in 2025 if it's not extended through the passage of Measure H. Measure H applies a \$120 parcel tax to raise \$12 million for the program and pushes the expiration date out another 14 years.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Berkeley Measures

Berkeley Measure L: [Affordable Housing & Infrastructure Bond](#)

Berkeley City Council voted to place Measure L on the ballot, making it the largest bond measure ever proposed to Berkeley voters. The proposal will authorize a \$650 million bond to acquire, improve, and construct affordable housing and do infrastructure improvements. The bond will be repaid over 48 years through a property tax of just over \$40 per \$100,000 of assessed value, meaning the average property in the city will be taxed at \$265 to pay off the bond.

We would prefer to see a move toward more sustainable, long-term funding sources, which is why [TechEquity Collaborative has been a strong proponent of reforming Prop 13](#). However, until better funding sources are identified and approved, bonds are one of the only tools cities have at their disposal to address the funding shortages they face in providing affordable housing.

Position: Yes

Berkeley Measure M: [Vacancy Tax](#)

In an effort to push landlords to put their buildings on the rental market rather than holding them vacant as a speculative investment, Berkeley City Council has placed Measure M on the ballot to institute a vacancy tax. Oakland passed a similar law in 2019, and San Francisco voters will decide on their own vacancy tax proposal, also called Measure M, on this year’s ballot.

Under Measure M, units that are vacant for more than 182 days are taxed with smaller properties like duplexes, triplexes, and single-family homes owned by a corporation or LLC penalized at \$3,000 in the first year with fines increasing to \$6,000 in subsequent years. Units in larger apartment complexes pay a heftier fine with a \$6,000 fee in the first year and doubling to \$12,000 in subsequent years. The rates will increase with inflation year after year and raise \$3.9 to \$5.9 million annually; all tax proceeds will go to the city’s general fund.

Position: Yes

Berkeley Measure N: [Article 34 Low Income Housing](#)

California's Article 34—a racist relic of our state's constitution—requires that local governments must have their electorate vote to approve affordable housing that will use public funds before it can be built. Until Article 34 is repealed, cities will have to continue to put measures like this one on the ballot.

Measure N will satisfy Article 34's requirements by authorizing the city to build 3,000 low-income units of housing. The measure wouldn't provide funding to build any housing, and it doesn't greenlight any specific projects, it only authorizes future units assuming the city can line up the land, funding, and resources necessary to build later on.

Position: Yes, [and we should repeal Article 34](#).

San Mateo County Measures

East Palo Alto Measure L: Residential Rental Property Business Tax Measure

Measure L would impose a tax on the profits collected by landlords by applying a 1.5% gross receipts tax for those with five or more rental units. The tax can't be passed on to tenants and would raise approximately \$1.4 million each year. The measure was placed on the ballot by a unanimous vote of the city council and with the support of all eight members of the city's rent stabilization board. The measure provides exemptions for landlords who are experiencing hardship, apartments rented through federal assistance programs like Section 8 housing vouchers, rooms rented in single-family homes, new construction, and accessory dwelling units like backyard cottages.

Position: Yes

Menlo Park Measure V: Citizen's Vote for Residential Zoning Changes

Menlo Park anti-growth neighborhood activists gathered petition signatures to place Measure V on the ballot. If passed, the measure would require that zoning changes for residential neighborhoods be approved by voters, adding a major hurdle to developing desperately-needed housing in the area.

The measure wants to ensure that Menlo Park zoning remains as it is currently, restricting the majority of the city to single-family homes with large lot sizes and low density. This means more affordable housing options like duplexes, triplexes, and apartment buildings would remain scarce and would keep development out of the ultra-expensive, ultra-exclusionary city.

Position: No

South San Francisco Measure AA: Article 34 Affordable Housing Authorization

California's Article 34—a racist relic of our state's constitution—requires that local governments must have their electorate vote to approve affordable housing that will use public funds before it can be built. South San Francisco has had enough of piecemeal Article 34 approvals where they go back to the voters election after election to ask for the approval of a few thousand units, just as cities like Berkeley and Oakland are doing on their ballots this year.

Instead, South San Francisco is taking a new tact, and attempting to bypass periodic affordable housing unit authorization by passing Measure AA. If passed, the measure will bypass the Article 34 approvals by allowing the City Council to approve affordable housing developments not exceeding 1% of the city's existing housing stock with the amount allowed to roll over year over year for eight years.

Position: Yes, [and we should repeal Article 34](#).

South San Francisco Measure DD: Universal Preschool Parcel Tax

Placed on the ballot through a petition, Measure DD imposes a parcel tax at \$2.50 per square foot on commercial properties larger than 25,000 sq ft. This means the tax would be paid by the city's largest employers with sprawling facilities, mostly the thriving biotech industry. The funds will help to develop and improve childcare facilities and provide a universal early childhood education program for anyone who lives or works in South San Francisco with children ages 2.5 to 5.

Position: No Position. This measure does not have a close nexus to our issue areas.

Santa Clara County Measures

None of these measures intersect with our issue areas, so we're taking no positions in Santa Clara County.

Candidate Recommendations

Assembly District 12: Sara Aminzadeh

On November 8, 2022 voters in Marin County and southeastern Sonoma County will vote to determine who will represent them in the Assembly now that the seat has been vacated. The district is currently held by Assemblymember Marc Levine, who is leaving the position to run for Insurance Commissioner.

In the upcoming election for Assembly District 12, **our recommendation is to vote for Sara Aminzadeh.**

In a coastal region plagued by drought and rising sea conditions, the imminent threat of wildfire and high tides has driven many of California's north coast lawmakers to focus on environmental impacts, including Sarah Aminzadeh. As a member of California's Coastal Commission, she has [spoken out in support](#) of legislation that addresses sea-level rise, including SB 1, which was signed into law in 2021 and provides a significant investment of \$100 million each year for sea-level rise adaptation. Thousands across the state, including in coastal Marin and Sonoma counties, could lose their homes from the sea level rise and shoreline erosion it creates. Attention to long-term threats to housing like sea-level rise and increased wildfire threat is crucial to preserving existing housing.

Aminzadeh also appears to understand how the development of new housing intersects with her environmental priorities. Aminzadeh has stated that as a lawmaker, she would work to address the increasing homelessness crisis, [particularly through policies that would incentivize transit-oriented and affordable housing](#). Transit-oriented development (TOD) is the urban planning practice that prioritizes developing dense housing like apartment towers within walking distance of major transit hubs like rapid bus routes or train stations. The TOD theory is that by concentrating the population near transit, we can reduce the carbon footprint created by car commutes to work, which is aligned with Aminzadeh's environmental platform.

TOD has been a lightning rod in California housing politics over the last several years, Sen. Scott Wiener of San Francisco has introduced several iterations of a bill that would "upzone"—allow the development of taller denser buildings—near transit, and do so "by-right", overriding local government's ability to nix developments that meet certain criteria. The most famous version and the one that drew the most controversy over the last several years was SB 50 (2020) which [left advocates deeply divided](#). Aminzadeh fell short of a full-throated endorsement of SB 50-style upzoning, saying that she wants transit-oriented development, but that control over where and how that development is done should remain local.

At TechEquity Action, we view the development of dense housing that preserves open areas and creates a greenbelt by concentrating residents near their workplaces and transit is an important tactic to address housing and environmental issues. There could be strong alignment on this basis, but unfortunately, the candidate stops short of a bold stance on TOD that would force the hand of local governments. Dense development in the urban cores of the district is unpopular with voters who are overwhelmingly homeowners (62%) and who enjoy a median home price of \$1.4 million, a value that will only continue to rise with constricted supply and a lack of new development. Given the electorate in Marin and Sonoma counties, who can be staunchly anti-development and exclusionary, it's understandable that Aminzadeh isn't pushing the boundaries in her platform; we hope that once elected, Aminzadeh will become a staunch ally in progressive housing policy, both for her district and for California at-large.

If elected as Assemblywoman for AD 12, we urge Aminzadeh to take a more aggressive approach to addressing renter protections and housing affordability in California. While we applaud her commitment to the environment, we would like to see her do more to protect vulnerable communities being pushed out of their homes into less expensive rural areas that are more susceptible to wildfires. We hope we have the opportunity to work with Aminzadeh to strengthen her positions in these areas.

Assembly District 20: Liz Ortega

Current Assembly District 20 representative, Bill Quirk, is retiring and vacating his seat. The district—which encompasses Hayward, Castro Valley, San Leandro, Union City, and stretches east into parts of Dublin and San Ramon—will elect a new Assemblymember on Tuesday, November 8th to represent them in Sacramento.

In the upcoming primary election for Assembly District 20, **our recommendation is to vote for Liz Ortega.**

Since 2011, Ortega has been working at the Alameda Labor Council, fighting to improve the lives of working people in Alameda County. Elected five years ago as Executive Secretary-Treasurer of the Alameda Labor Council, she became the first Latina to hold the position. Before working at the Labor Council, she acted as Statewide Political Director for AFSCME Local 3299, helping to move policy through the state legislature that would support union members—employees of the University of California system. Ortega’s experience working in the state capital to advocate for working families and her existing connections with elected officials and labor leaders make her well-positioned to hit the ground running to champion issues that move the needle on economic justice.

She’s worked as a part of the Labor Council’s Executive Committee to advance pay increases for workers, negotiate with employers to ensure community benefit, and win better conditions for workers. Most recently, the Alameda Labor Council has been in negotiation with the Oakland A’s over the proposed Howard Terminal, which would build a new ballpark at Oakland’s waterfront. Ortega and her Labor Council colleagues have worked to ensure that the A’s stay in Oakland so the city can benefit from the economic development surrounding the stadium, but has held the line in those negotiations to ensure the jobs the stadium will provide are high quality. The Council also had to balance the impact that the stadium would have on the neighborhood and carefully weigh terms at the negotiating table to ensure the community benefits and the development doesn’t hasten displacement and gentrification. The negotiations are ongoing, but Ortega says she’s committed to reaching a deal that will support Oakland’s working families.

When it comes to housing, Ortega is deeply aware of its intersections with the labor issues she has spent her career championing. Skyrocketing rents and home prices are beyond reach for working families and wages have not kept pace with the rising cost of living. Ortega sees housing and labor as interconnected positions and her platform focuses on ensuring that people have the

education, training, and access to good-paying, family-supporting jobs and that housing—especially affordable housing—is plentiful and accessible.

Ortega has proven herself a strong advocate for working people and her platform aligns well with TechEquity Action across core issues like affordable housing development, a living wage, and strengthening the social safety net. For these reasons, we believe Liz Ortega is the best choice for Assembly District 20.

Assembly District 24: Alex Lee

On November 8, 2022, residents of Assembly District 24 including Fremont, Newark, Milpitas, and parts of Northeast San Jose will cast their ballots. The district is currently represented by Assemblymember Alex Lee, who faces new challengers to retain his seat now that the boundaries of his district have been redrawn.

In the upcoming election for Assembly District 24, **our recommendation is a vote for Alex Lee.**

In 2020, Alex Lee had a meteoric rise to the California Assembly, beating out a crowded field of hopefuls to become the youngest Assemblymember in the state. This year, he's running in a newly redrawn district to keep his spot at the Capitol. Lee entered the legislature with a bold agenda and has proven in just two legislative sessions that he is a reliable vote on some of the toughest-to-pass housing and labor bills. Lee isn't just supporting others' bills, he's also running an agenda of his own, with dozens of bills that push his colleagues to consider policy interventions beyond the status quo solutions.

Lee's biggest swing in the legislature this year has been around social housing. While definitions vary, social housing developments generally include a mix of market- and below-market rate units that accommodate a wide range of income levels and are heavily subsidized with public funding. They also grant residents democratic control over decisions concerning their living conditions.

Lee's proposal to advance social housing, [AB 2053](#), would have established a California Housing Authority (CHA), to produce and preserve mixed-income housing. Lee's plan was for the CHA to construct housing and lease it at no more than 30% of the resident's income.

While we would like to see Lee refine the proposal to include ongoing public investment in housing stability (the bill currently commits to revenue neutrality—or, that tenant rents will eventually cover CHA development and management costs), we are nevertheless encouraged that Lee is bringing decommodified housing to the fore of California policy debates.

It's encouraging that Lee has endeavored to take on such a big fight in the legislature so early in his tenure. Housing is difficult and fraught territory in the legislature, but Lee is undeterred.

Lee also sponsored [AB 2050](#), a bill aimed at closing loopholes in the state's Ellis Act—a law that allows landlords to evict tenants by “going out of business”. The bill would have curbed property speculators who purchase buildings and use the Ellis Act to evict long-term rent-controlled tenants and then resell for a higher profit. The reform to the Ellis Act would have ensured that this type of eviction cannot be used until after five years of property ownership. While both AB 2053

and AB 2050 failed this legislative cycle, Lee seems undeterred for moving similar bills in next year's session.

We look forward to Lee continuing to lead on bold solutions in housing, tenants' rights, social safety net, and workers' rights. For these reasons, we believe Alex Lee is the best candidate for Assembly District 24.

Senate District 10: Aisha Wahab

The election for Senate District 10 is coming up on November 8th, 2022. The district encompasses Hayward, Union City, parts of Dublin, Fremont, Newark, Milpitas, Santa Clara, and the northwest half of San Jose. The seat is currently held by Senator Bob Wieckowski, who is leaving the position after seven years of service.

In the upcoming election for Senate District 10, **our recommendation is to vote for Aisha Wahab.**

Cities within Senate District 10 like Hayward and Fremont have been growing to accommodate the influx of tech workers who long for more space and comparatively affordable rent and home prices but are still within reasonable commuting distance to the core of Silicon Valley. Historically, the region has been home to blue-collar and industrial workers, but the region is struggling to maintain its affordability as the region rapidly grows.

As Mayor Pro-Tempore of the City of Hayward, Aisha Wahab has been a fierce advocate for housing affordability and renter protections. Alongside the Hayward City Council, Wahab has helped increase the number of affordable rental units from 1,000 to 10,000, adding sorely needed housing. During a town hall hosted by Silicon Valley at Home (for which TechEquity Action was a co-host), Wahab advocated for the preservation of affordable housing units and the need to protect and expand the rights of tenants to stabilize families in their communities. In addition to this, Wahab proposed the [Emergency Stay in Place](#) ordinance in 2020, to stabilize tenants and help mortgage-holders and small businesses in the community during the coronavirus pandemic. The urgency to secure families at risk of displacement remains as the pandemic rages on. We applaud Wahab's commitment to addressing the need through a multi-pronged approach that follows what housing advocates refer to as the 3P's framework—protecting tenants, preserving existing affordable housing, and producing additional housing.

Wahab has also shown accountability when she has made mistakes and that she is responsive to feedback from the community. Wahab was at the center of a controversial decision to grant a developer an exemption from a tenant protection ordinance so that they could convert existing units to affordable housing. [When the plan resulted in evictions](#), Wahab acknowledged her error and urged the Council to revisit the decision. We are encouraged that Wahab demonstrates the ability to listen to her constituents, prioritize the needs of those who are most marginalized, and find remedies that support our core values.

When it comes to fighting for a living wage, Wahab has shown a commitment to standing up for her community even when it may not be the most popular choice. In a tough vote, Wahab opted

to support a proposal to raise the minimum wage voting in favor of extending a [previously-promised \\$2 an hour raise](#), going against her colleagues on the Hayward City Council who had the majority in opposing the change. Although Wahab was outvoted, we support Wahab's courage to take bold stances on decisions that support a living wage for families. If elected, we hope to see her undertake this strong approach when addressing labor protections to ensure good wages, benefits, and working conditions for Californians.

For these reasons, we believe that Wahab's approach to addressing the housing crisis and her ability to advocate for workers' rights will be an asset to the Senate and will advance economic justice in our state.